

**Liberal Learning Program Motions for Faculty Meetings: Oct. 24<sup>th</sup>, 2014 & Dec. 10<sup>th</sup>, 2014**

**1. Motion # 1, F14. Oct 24, Senior Capstone Seminar** (voice vote)

All SUNY New Paltz students will complete a capstone, senior-seminar as a part of their graduation requirements (All motions). By Sept. 2015, all Academic Departments will forward to the Curriculum Committee the syllabi for their designated capstone, senior-seminars for all of their major plans.

**2. Motion # 2, F14. Oct. 24<sup>th</sup>, Composition Requirement** (voice vote)

All SUNY New Paltz students will complete 2 (3 credit) courses in Composition as a part of their General Education requirements. (Main Motion, Substitute Motion #1 and Substitute Motion #2) (*Qualified students can waive the first course in the sequence, Substitute Motion #1, Sp. 14*)

**3. Motion # 3, F14, Oct. 24<sup>th</sup>, Math Requirement** (voice vote)

All SUNY New Paltz students will complete 1 (3 credit) course in Mathematics, *demonstrating a Math competency level of 4* (Substitute Motion #1, Sp. 14), as a part of their General Education requirements. *Courses taken to raise a math competency level to 4 will not count toward fulfilling this GE Math requirement (Substitute Motion #1, Sp. 14) .*

**4. Motion #4, F14, Oct. 24<sup>th</sup>, Information Management Competency** (voice vote)

All students will develop competency in information management as a part of completing their general education requirements. At New Paltz., *this "information management" competency will be assessed in the 2<sup>nd</sup> course in the two-course composition sequence, Comp 2.*

**5. Motion #5, F14, Oct. 24<sup>th</sup>, Critical Thinking Competency** (voice vote)

All students will develop competency in critical thinking as a part of completing their general education requirements.

*At New Paltz, this "critical thinking" competency will be assessed in courses included in the NSCI category (Substitute Motion #2, F14).*

(The Main Motion and Substitute Motion # 1 appear to assume that the critical thinking competency will be assessed in courses currently approved under the GE 3 competency of "Systematic Inquiry"). If we wish to assess critical thinking in all GE categories, we would need an alternative motion. "All GE 3 courses currently approved as Systematic Inquiry will henceforth (Fall 15) be assessed in terms of the Critical Thinking objectives.

**6. Motion #6, F14, Oct. 24<sup>th</sup>, Diversity Requirement** (written vote)

Consistent with our SUNY New Paltz mission statement and our history, we believe that all students should be exposed to at least one course that examines the perspectives of traditionally underrepresented groups within the United States.

A. Courses meeting the Diversity objectives will comprise an additional category added to the BOT guidelines (Main Motion as of Sp 14)

Or

B. Courses meeting the Diversity objectives will be a choice fulfilling 1 of the 2 required courses among USST(American History), WEST, DIVR, WORLD (Substitute Motion #1).

Or

C. Courses designated as meeting the Diversity requirement will also fulfill the objectives of one of the following categories: USST(American History), ARTS, HUM, SSCI, WEST, WORLD. FLNG courses do not fulfill the DIVR requirement nor do NSCI courses (Substitute Motion #2).

(I expect our Oct. 24<sup>th</sup> meeting to end here)

7. **Motion #7, F14, Dec. 10th, Foreign Language Requirement** (written vote)

Although the BOT does not require any courses in a Foreign Language, we believe that all students should demonstrate competency in a Foreign Language at the intermediate level. Therefore, SUNY New Paltz students must complete 2 (3 credit) courses in a foreign language (Main Motion as of Sp14) *at the introductory level (100 level) or 1 (3 credit) course at the intermediate level (202 and above).*(Substitute Motion #1 Sp 14 and Substitute Motion #2 F14). *Students who have taken ESL classes in high school or college will be exempt from this 6 credit requirement.* (Substitute Motion #2, F14).

8. **Motion #8, F14, Dec. 10th, Natural Science Requirement** (written vote)

Although the BOT does not require any courses in a Natural Science, we believe that all students should be required to take 2 (3 credit) lecture courses in NSCI (Main Motion as of Sp. 14) or 1 (4 credit) lab course for science majors (Substitute Motion #2, Fall 14).

Substitute Motion #1 as of Sp 14 requires only 1 Natural Science course.

9. **Motion #9, F14, Dec. 10th, Content Area Requirements**

The preceding motions clarify our desires in the required areas of the BOT guidelines. Resolutions #7 and #8 clarify our additional requirements in the Content Areas of Natural Science and Foreign Languages which the BOT places in a basket from which students must chose 5 categories among the 8.

After deciding the preceding motions, we still must reconcile competing proposals on the following 6 Content Areas: American History (USST); the ARTS (ARTS); Humanities (HUM), Social Sciences (SSCI), Western Civilizations (WEST), and World Civilizations (World).

- a. The Main Motion requires students to take six (3 credit) courses from each of these categories: American History (USST); the ARTS (ARTS); Humanities (HUM), Social Sciences (SSCI), Western Civilizations (WEST), and World Civilizations (World).
- b. Substitute Motion # 1 requires students to take 5 courses: 1 Social Science (SSCI); 2 from HUM & ARTS and 2 from American History (USST), WEST, DIVR, WRLD.
- c. Substitute Motion #2 requires students to take 6 courses, one from each category or if many courses are **dual-categorized across two content areas**, students could reduce that number to 3 courses.

Rationale: Allowing courses to count as no more than two GE categories will afford greater flexibility both for students meeting their educational goals and for faculty adjusting to departmental needs. Moreover, dual classification has the pedagogical effect of drawing students' attention to multiple qualities of a course, aiding them to see cross-discipline connections. Further benefits as well as disadvantages are laid out below.

<b>Benefits for students</b>	<b>Disadvantages for students</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fewer total GE courses enhance students' ability to graduate on time while pursuing high-credit majors or multiple majors/minors.</li> <li>• Dual categorization can enable richer study experiences with a wider range of meaningful connections being made across disciplines. This is an explicit way of showing students how what they learn is linked across different disciplines or methods of study.</li> <li>• Students get greater choice of how to achieve each GE category.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The presented content in courses where double dipping is possible may become watered down. However, in many cases courses already meet the qualifications for two content categories, so content would not be adversely affected.</li> <li>• A student who fulfills a course requirement in a particular department through dual categorization may thereby miss out on a deeper, more discipline-grounded learning experience that would have resulted from taking an singly categorized, discipline-specific course in that department. Again, this is unlikely to be a problem in courses that already "fit" two categories yet are only currently classified as one.</li> </ul>
<b>Benefits for faculty</b>	<b>Disadvantages for faculty</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No one category is excluded or given preference. Although COMP, MATH, NSCI, and FLNG are excluded from dual categorization, one reason for this is that students have a more limited choice of COMP, MATH, and FLNG courses depending on their preparation. Dually categorizing these would hurt the GE category that was added.</li> <li>• Given the likely student preference for dually categorized courses, departments that would like to increase their GE offerings can choose to consider which of their courses would qualify to count as 2 categories. Those who have trouble staffing their expected GE seat quota may choose to keep their courses with the current single category. Since the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A GE course that is cross-listed in two categories would need to be assessed for both categories. However, this could be mitigated by ensuring that a given course may only be considered for assessment of one GE category per year.</li> <li>• Faculty would need to submit proposals to the GE Board/Curriculum Committee. Although this would involve a short-term spike in workload, it would not be nearly as comprehensive as the overhaul from GE2 to GE3.</li> </ul>

total GE course load that many students take will be reduced, those departments may ultimately be able to offer fewer GE sections.	
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- Designing courses where dual classification is possible can help expand a faculty member's teaching, study, and even scholarship in exciting new directions.

#### 10. **Motion #10, F14, Dec. 10<sup>th</sup>, 2 Com Enhanced Courses should replace 1 Writing Intensive Course**

Substitute Motion #2 proposes that we replace the current graduation requirement of 1 writing intensive course with 2 Communication enhanced courses. These courses could be a part of the major, but could be taken in any department. Communication Enhanced courses could also fulfill a GE requirement. (See the attached explanation of Communication Enhanced courses.)

##### Rationale:

We can probably all agree that written and oral communication skills are essential both for our students to probe more deeply into their discipline of choice and to excel in their future careers. Primary concerns have dealt with the feasibility of changing our current modes of instruction and ensuring that whatever change we make truly does enhance our students' mastery of these communication skills, and both of these concerns have been adequately addressed in this proposal.

Over 55% of 300- and 400-level courses currently offered across the university have less than 20 students, and over 80% of these upper-level courses have less than 30 students. Thus, the recommendation (*not* an absolute limit) that communication-enhanced courses be limited to 20 students does not greatly restrict the choices a department could target for this certification. Although certain departments may be more challenged due to having a greater proportion of high-enrolled classes, the flexibility in meeting the communication-enhanced requirements will allow students in those majors to take a communication-enhanced course outside their major if needed. Those students would not be significantly disadvantaged because GE courses can apply for qualification as communication-enhanced.

Moreover, the requirements for what would qualify as a communication-enhanced course, as written in the proposal, are of similar rigor to our current WI courses. Students will take the same Composition I and II sequence and then take 2 communication-enhanced courses instead of one writing intensive course. This also allows more opportunity for scaffolding of these written and oral communication skills.

## 11. Motion #11, F14, Dec. 10th, Prototyping a Liberal Education Seminar

Substitute Motion # 2 proposes that we approve experimentation with first-year seminars on a limited and optional basis.

Rationale: The clear majority of people who did not support the First Year Seminar as originally proposed were concerned about the costs of offering such a seminar. Since this prototype would only be running about 5-6 sections, costs are greatly reduced; at this level there are probably sufficient numbers of faculty who are both interested and can be available to teach without serious impact to their department. Since it is optional, if fewer faculty end up being interested and available then fewer sections will be offered. Moreover, a one-time allocation of funds is being requested for faculty development, money for adjuncts to replace faculty who wish to participate but who would otherwise have more departmental obligations, and curricular supplementation.

In addition, some faculty objected to having a common theme with 2-3 common learning objects, either because of concerns that not enough faculty (and students) would be sufficiently engaged in one topic or because of pedagogical concerns related to teaching material not within one's domain of expertise. While these issues are not directly addressed here, data will be collected to see whether the outlined approach is successful for students. Faculty involved in the prototype seminar can share their experiences. Depending on these outcomes, the Liberal Education Seminar can be continued/expanded, revised, or discontinued after the 3-year trial period.